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High Quality Teacher

Before this year, I had never formally studied education. With the application period into the School of Education looming, I decided to immerse myself as much as possible in my intended profession and took four education classes; I could not have prepared myself for how much I learned in only three short months.

While many people perceive teaching to be an easy profession, this semester has taught me that this assertion could not be further from the truth. Teaching begins before you arrive at school, persists throughout the day, and ends long after you’ve arrived back at home. Educators are planning before they do, analyzing while they are executing, and reflecting once they’ve finished. Entrusted each day with shaping the minds of our children, teachers spend more time with their students than their parents do; I’m hard-pressed to think of another profession as critical to the future of our society.

Through our readings, I’ve learned a great deal about my options and requirements as an educator. As a result, I’ve given significant thought to education philosophy, and have begun to lay the groundwork toward shaping the type of educator I wish to be. Our readings and classroom discussion have opened my eyes to the realities of the state of education in our country: the diversity, inequity and politics. I see standardized testing in a way I never have before. I see children, parents, educators and administrators in a way I never have before.

Chapter 13 is a great reference point, rich with information, presented in an organized, comprehensive manner. While I know that I need to do my best while in school to prepare myself for the workforce, I am aware that my education will not end here. Before I ever step foot in a classroom, I know that I will need to have a not only a clear vision of the teacher I want to be, but also the ability to recognize and execute the need to adapt and change, as needed. Already assessing my opportunities and limitations, I have begun to process my need to embrace organization, record keeping, and data collection and assessment. As a teacher, I know that I will continuously navigate a plethora of situations and circumstances. To illustrate my point, I attempted to make a list, and upon doing so, realized the futility.

When I reflect on my decision to leave the financial industry and become a teacher, I am reminded of a Forest E. Witcraft quote, which was recited to me by my mother countless times throughout the years: “A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove... but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.” This quote, to me, embodies the term “high quality teacher.” My hope is that despite the difficulty, my passion and love of education is as strong when I retire as it is today. I know that I will never be rich; I will reach into my pockets often, but my heart even more. If one student is positively impacted through my influence, my legacy will be one I can be proud of.